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**THE LIFE**  
**OF**  
**THOMAS PAINE,**  
**INTERSPERSED WITH**  
**REMARKS AND REFLECTIONS.**

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**BY WILLIAM COBBETT.**

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**" A life that's one continued scene  
" Of all that's infamous and mean."**

**CHURCHILL.**

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**LONDON;**  
**PRINTED BY S. M'DOWALL,**  
*No. 95, Leadenhall-street,*  
**AND SOLD AT No. 1, PATERNOSTER ROW.**  
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*Price Half-a-Crown.*

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**B**IOGRAPHICAL memoirs of persons, famous for the great good, or the great mischief they have done, are so sure to meet with a favourable reception in print, that it has long been the subject of astonishment, that none of the disciples of Paine should ever have thought of obliging the world with an account of his life. His being of mean birth could form no reasonable objection: when the life of his hero is spotless, the biographer feels a pride as well as pleasure in tracing him from the penurious shed to the pinnacle of renown. Besides, those from whom we might have expected the history of Old Common Sense, are professed admirers of all that is of low and even base extraction. They are continually boasting of the superior virtues of their "democratic floor," as

they call it; it therefore seems wonderful, that they should have neglected giving an instance of this superiority in the life of their *virtuous* leader.

THOMAS PAINE was born at Thetford, in the county of Norfolk (in England), on the 29th of January, 1736-7. His father was Joseph Pain, a staymaker by trade, and of the sect of the Quakers. His mother, Frances Cocke, daughter of an attorney at Thetford, and of the established Church.

By some accident, probably arising from the disagreement of his parents in their religious sentiments, the son was never baptized. He was, however, confirmed at the usual age, by the Bishop of Norwich, through the care of his aunt, Mrs. Cocke.

At the free-school of Thetford, under Mr. Knowles, young Paine was instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The expence of his education was defrayed by his father, with some assistance from his mother's relations.——At the age of thirteen, he became his father's apprentice, in the trade of a staymaker. At this employment he continued for five years; although he himself, forgetful, or regard-

less of the truth, has, in the second part of his *Rights of Man*, related that he entered on board the *Terrible* privateer, Captain Death, which was not fitted out till some years afterwards.

He went, at the age of nineteen, to try his fortune in London; where he worked for some time with Mr. Morris, an eminent staymaker in Hanover-street, Long-Acre.—After a very short stay in this situation, he repaired to Dover; and there obtained employment with Mr. Grace, a respectable staymaker. While Paine remained here, an attachment began between him and Miss Grace, his master's daughter; in consequence of which, Mr. Grace was induced to lend our adventurer ten pounds, to enable him to settle as a master-staymaker at Sandwich.

He settled at Sandwich in April 1759; but forgot to repay the ten pounds, or to fulfil the marriage, in expectation of which the money had been advanced to him.—Here, it seems, he took up his lodging in the market-place; and formed a little congregation, to whom he preached, in his lodging, as *an independent minister*.

In the meantime, he fell in love with a pretty, modest, young woman, Mary



Lambert, daughter of James Lambert; who, with his wife Mary, had come to Sittingbourne as an exciseman, before the year 1736; but, having been dismissed for misconduct, had opened a shop, and acted, besides, as bum-bailiff of Sittingbourne. Both father and mother were by this time dead, in indigent circumstances; and the daughter was now waiting-woman to Mrs. Solly, wife of Richard Solly, an eminent woollen-draper at Sandwich.—Mary Lambert and Thomas Paine were married on the 27th of September, 1759. Although he was only twenty-two, and she twenty-one years of age, yet, by the scars of disease, or by the native harshness of his features, he appeared at the time of the marriage so much older than she, that the good women of Sandwich expressed their astonishment, that *so fine a girl should marry so old a fellow.*

Thomas, soon after the marriage, finding himself somehow disappointed, began to maltreat his wife. Little more than two months had passed, when this became visible to the whole town. By Mrs. Solly's aid, their poverty was occasionally relieved. From the furnished lodging in which Paine had hitherto lived, the young

couple soon removed to a house, for which they, with some difficulty, obtained furniture upon credit. But he having contracted debts which he was unable to discharge, our adventurer, with his wife, found themselves obliged to take what is called in Scotland, a *moon-light flitting*; and on the night, between the seventh and eighth of April, 1760, they set out from Sandwich to Margate; Thomas carrying with him the furniture which he had purchased on credit, a stove belonging to his house, and the stays of a customer. The stays were recovered from him by a timeful claim. He sold the furniture by auction at Margate.—The sale of goods obtained upon credit on a false pretext, is a crime that was formerly punished by exposure on the pillory, which has since been changed for transportation.

At this place, the reader will undoubtedly call to mind Paine's vehement sallies against the English penal code. All the *patriots* look upon lawgivers, judges, juries, and the whole suite of justice, as their mortal enemies. "Inhuman wretches," says Tom, "that are leagued together to rob man of his Rights, and with them

of his existence." This is like the thief, who, when about to receive sentence of death, protested he would swear the peace against the judge, for that he verily believed he had a design upon his life.—Reader, while you live, suspect those tender-hearted fellows who shudder at the name of the gallows. When you hear a man loud against the severity of the laws, set him down for a rogue.

From Margate, Paine returned to London. His wife set out with him: but her subsequent fate is not well known. Some say that she perished on the road, by ill usage and a premature birth: others, in consequence of diligent enquiry, believe her to be still alive; although the obscurity of her retreat prevents ready discovery.

This is the Paine that is always exclaiming against aristocracy, because, as he pretends, its laws and customs are cruel and unnatural.—“With what kind of parental reflections,” says the hypocrite in his Rights of Man, “can the father and mother contemplate their tender offspring?—To restore parents to their children, and children to their parents, relation to each other, and man to society, the French



Constitution has destroyed the law of primogenitureship."—Is not this fine cant to entrap the unsuspecting vulgar? Who would not imagine that the soul which pours itself forth in joy for the restoration of all these dear relatives to each other, was made up of constancy and tenderness? Who would suspect the man whose benevolence is thus extended to foreigners, whom he never saw, of being a brutal and savage husband, and an unnatural father?—Do you ask, "with what kind of parental reflections the father and mother can contemplate their tender offspring?"—Hypocritical monster! with what kind of reflections did you contemplate the last agonies of a poor, weak, credulous woman, who had braved the scoffs of the world, who had abandoned every thing for your sake, had put her all in your possession, and who looked up to you, and you alone, for support?

Paine's humanity, like that of all the reforming philosophers of the present enlightened day, is of the speculative kind. It never breaks out into action. Hear these people, and you would think them overflowing with the milk of human kindness. They stretch their benevolence to

the extremities of the globe: it embraces every living creature—except those who have the misfortune to come in contact with them. They are all citizens of the world: country, and friends, and relations are unworthy the attention of men who are occupied in rendering all mankind happy and free.

I ever suspect the sincerity of a man whose discourse abounds in expressions of universal philanthropy. Nothing is easier than for a person of some imagination to raise himself to a swell of sentiment, without the aid of one single feeling of the heart. Rousseau, for instance, is everlastingly babbling about his *genre humain* (human race), and his "*coeur aimant et tendre*," (tender and loving heart). He writes for the human race, his heart bleeds for the distresses of the human race, and in the midst of all this he sends his unfortunate bastards to the poor-house, the receptacle of misery! Virtuous, and tender-hearted, and sympathetic Rousseau! Certainly nothing is so disgusting as this, except it be to see the humane and sentimental Sterne wiping away a tear at the sight of a dead jack-ass, while his injured wife and child were

pining away their days in a nunnery, and while he was debauching the wife of his friend.

In July, 1761, Thomas returned without her, to his father's house.—Having been unsuccessful in the business of a staymaker, he was now willing to leave it for the Excise. In the Excise, after fourteen months of study and trials, he was established on the 1st of December, 1762, at the age of twenty-five. The kindness of Mr. Cocksedge, Recorder of Thetford, procured for him this appointment. He was sent, as a supernumerary, first to Grantham; and on the 8th of August, 1764, to Alford.—Being detected in some misconduct, he was, on the 27th of August, 1765, dismissed from his office.

In this state of wretchedness and disgrace, he repaired to London a third time. Here charity supplied him with clothes, money, and lodging; till he was, on the 11th of July, 1766, restored to the Excise, although not to immediate employment.—For support, in the meantime, he engaged himself for a salary of five and twenty pounds a year, in the service of Mr. Noble, who keeping an academy in Lemon-street, Goodman's-fields, wanted



an usher to teach English, and walk out with the children. He won nobody's favour in this family: and, at Christmas, left the service of Mr. Noble for that of Mr. Gardner, who then taught a reputable school at Kensington. With Mr. Gardner he continued only three months. He would now willingly have taken orders; but being only an English scholar, could not obtain the certificate of his qualifications previously necessary. Being violently moved, however, with the spirit of preaching, he wandered about for a while as an itinerant Methodist; and, as urged by his necessities, or directed by his spirit, preached in Moorfields, and in various populous places in England.

At length, in March, 1768, he again obtained employment in his calling of an Excise-officer, and was sent in this capacity to Lewes in Sussex.——He was now at the age of thirty-one, ambitious of shining as a *jolly fellow* among his companions; yet without restraining his sullen, overbearing temper, although to the neglect of his duty as an Exciseman. By his intrepidity in water and on ice, he gained the appellation of *Commodore*. He had gone to live with Mr. Samuel

Ollive, a tobacconist ; and in his house he continued till that worthy man's death. Mr. Ollive died in bad circumstances ; leaving a widow, one daughter, and several sons. For some dishonest intermeddling with the effects of his deceased landlord, Paine was turned out of the house by Mr. Attersol, the executor ; but, being more favourably regarded by the widow and daughter, he was received again by them in 1770. He soon after commenced grocer ; opening Ollive's shop in his own name. He, at the same time, worked the tobacco-mill on his own behalf ; and, regardless of the regulations of the Excise, and of his duty as an Excise-officer, for several years continued this trade, engaging without scruple in smuggling practices, in order to render it lucrative.

In 1771, at the age of thirty-four, he again ventured on matrimony. Elizabeth Ollive, the daughter of his late landlord whom he now married, was a handsome and worthy woman, eleven years younger than himself ; and had it not been for her unfortunate attachment to him, might have married to much greater advantage. — Upon the occasion of this second mar-

riage, Thomas Paine thought proper to represent himself as a bachelor, although he must have known that he was either a widower—or, indeed, if his former wife was then alive, a married man; and although the marriage act has declared it to be felony, without benefit of clergy, for a person thus wilfully to make a false entry on the register.—In the same year, Paine first commenced author. *Rumbold*, candidate for New Shoreham, required a song to celebrate the patriotism and the conviviality of the occasion. Paine produced one, which was accepted, and rewarded with three guineas.—His poetical honours he seems to have afterwards forgotten; for, in 1779, he asserted in the newspapers, that, till the appearance of his *Common Sense*, he had never published a syllable.

By certain boldness and bustle of character, although without the recommendation of honesty, he had become a sort of chief among the Excisemen. They began about this time to be dissatisfied that their salaries were not augmented with the increase of the national wealth, of the public revenue, and of the necessities of life. Citizen Paine undertook to



write their *Case*; and, in 1772, produced an octavo pamphlet of one and twenty pages, containing an *Introduction*: *The State of the Salary of the Officers of Excise; and Thoughts on the Corruption arising from the Poverty of Excise Officers*. Of this pamphlet four thousand copies were printed. A contribution was made by the Excisemen, to supply the expences attending the solicitation of their case. Paine bustled about, as their agent, in London, in the winter of 1773. But nothing was done; and although liberally paid by his employers, he forgot to pay his printer.

In his attention to the common cause of the Excisemen, he had neglected his own private affairs. His credit failed. He sunk into difficulties and distress: and in this situation, made a bill of sale of his whole effects, to Mr. Whitfield, a considerable grocer at Lewes, and his principal creditor. Mr. Whitfield, seeing no prospect of payment, took possession of the premises, and, in April, 1774, disposed of them as his own. The other creditors, thinking themselves outwitted by Whitfield, and cheated by Paine, had recourse to the rigours of law. Paine

sought concealment for a time in the cock-loft of the White Horse Inn.

About the same time, he was again dismissed from the Excise. His carelessness of the duties of his office—dealing as a grocer in exciseable articles—buying smuggled tobacco, as a grinder of snuff—and conniving at others for the concealment of it himself—could no longer be overlooked or excused. His dismissal took place on the 8th of April, 1774. He petitioned to be restored, but without success.

Often have I observed, that disappointment, and refusal of favours asked from Government, are the great sources of what is now-a-days called patriotism. Here we are arrived at the cause of Tom Paine's mortal enmity to the British Government. Had his humble petition been granted—had he been restored to his office, he might, and undoubtedly would have stigmatized the Americans as rebels and traitors. He would have probably been among the supplest tools of Lord North, instead of being the champion of American Independence.

Who, after reading this, will believe that he was actuated by laudable mo-

tives, when he wrote against taxation—when he called the Excise a hell-born monster? He long was, you see, an advocate for this hell-born monster, and even one of its choice ministers, and such would he have been to this day, had not his *petition* been rejected. What, Thomas! petition to be one of the under devils of a hell-born monster!

Whatever may be the services which his vindictive pen rendered to the cause of the United States, the people of this country owe him no tribute of gratitude, any more than they do to the pretended friendship of the French Court or nation. Both had the same objects in view—the furthering of their interests, and glutting of their revenge. They looked upon the revolted colonists as their tools; and if America profited by their interference, it was owing to the wisdom of her councils, and not to their good-will.

When patriot Tom began his career in America, it was assuredly very necessary for him to assert, that, till the appearance of his *Common Sense*, he had never published a single syllable; for it would have looked a little awkward to see that work coming from the pen of a discarded



Excise-officer, who had petitioned for a reinstatement in his oppressive office. Not a whit less awkward does it now appear, to hear clamours against the expences of the British Government coming from the very man who would willingly have added to those expences by an augmentation of his own salary. He tells the poor people of Great Britain, that their "hard-earned pence are wrung from them by the King and his Ministers;" yet we see, that he wished a little more to be wrung from them, when he expected a share.—Disinterested and compassionate soul!

The English Clergy, too, and the tithes they receive, have been considerable objects of Thomas's outcry. Those battering rams, called the Rights of Man, have been directed against these with their full force. But what would the hypocrite have said, had he been able to slip within the walls of the Church? Like Dr. Priestley, Tom looks upon tithes as oppressive, merely because he is not a Rector.

How little his attempt to obtain Holy Orders (sacrilegious monster!), and his Methodist preaching agree with the opi-

nions expressed in his "Age of Reason" I shall notice, when I come to that epoch in his life, when he found it convenient to throw aside the mask, and become an open blasphemer.

Amid this knavery and mismanagement, Paine had not distinguished himself by conjugal tenderness to his second wife. He had now lived with her three years and a half, and, besides cruelly beating, had otherwise treated her, wilfully and shamefully, in a manner which would excite the indignation and resentment of every virtuous married woman, and which must ensure to him the detestation of every honourable man. From an attention to the known delicacy and modesty of our fair country-women, we forbear, in this abstract, to state the particulars, though they are published at length in Mr. Oldys's pamphlet.—The consequence of all this was a separation between him and his wife, upon the conditions of her paying her husband thirty-five pounds sterling, and his agreeing to claim no part of whatever property she might hereafter acquire.

Paine now retired to London; but would not leave his wife in peace till

they had mutually entered into new articles of separation; in which it was declared on his part, that *he no longer found a wife a convenience*, and on her's, that *she had too long suffered the miseries of such a husband*.

This is the kind and philanthropic Tom Paine, who sets up such a piteous howl about the cruelty and tyranny of Kings!—"I have known many of those bold champions for liberty in my time," says the good old Vicar of Wakefield, "yet do I not remember one who was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant." What Dr. Johnson observes of Milton, may with justice be applied to every individual of the King-killing crew: "he looked upon woman as made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion." I would request the reader to look round among his acquaintance, and see if this observation does not every where hold good; see if there be one among the yelping kennel of modern patriots, who is not a bad husband, father, brother, or son. The same pride and turbulence of spirit that lead them to withhold every mark of respect and obedience from their superiors, lead them also to tyrannize over those who



are so unfortunate as to be subjected to their will. The laws of nature will seldom, if ever, be respected by the man who has set those of his country and of decorum at defiance; and from this degree of perversity, there is but one step to the defiance of heaven itself. The good citizen or subject, the good husband, parent, and child, and the good Christian, exist together, or they exist not at all.

From the circumstances attending Tom's separation from this last wife, we may make a pretty correct calculation of his value as a husband. The poor woman was obliged to pay him thirty-five pounds sterling to get rid of him; so that, a *democratic spouse*, even supposing him to come up to his great leader in worth, is just thirty-five pounds *worse than nothing*. Oh, base democracy! Why, it is absolutely worse than street-sweepings, or the filth of common-sewers.

The mob of Kings that the poor French have got, have lately set Thomas to writing down the credit of English bank-notes, a task that the dregs of his old brain were quite unequal to. Instead of useless labours of this kind, instead of attempting to write down the Bible and

bank-notes, I would recommend to him to oblige the people of his "beloved America," as he calls it, with a statement of the sums necessary to pay off all the democratic husbands in this continent, at the price his own wife fixed on himself; adding to the gross amount as much as would defray the expences of their transportation to their proper climate, France. Their wives, I dare say, would have no objection to imitate Mrs. Paine, as far as their last farthing would go; and if all wisdom is not banished from within the walls of the Congress, they would never refuse to make up the deficiency.

We have seen enough of Tom as a husband; now let us see what it is to be cursed with such a son.

Citizen Paine\* now finding that his notoriously bad character rendered it advisable for him to leave a country where he was known, he had the address to procure a recommendation to the late Dr. Franklin, in America, as a person who might, at such a crisis, be useful there. He accordingly sailed for America in September 1774.

The following letter from his mother to his wife, written about this time,

proves that she had the distress of knowing his crimes and misfortunes, and of feeling for them as a parent naturally feels for a child, wicked or unhappy.

Thetford, Norfolk, 27th July, 1774.

“ Dear Daughter,

“ I must beg leave to trouble you with my enquiries concerning my unhappy son and your husband : various are the reports, the which I find come originally from the Excise-office; such as his vile treatment to you ; his secreting upwards of £30 intrusted with him to manage the petition for advance of salary ; and that, since his discharge, he have petitioned to be restored, which was rejected with scorn. Since which, I am told, he have left England. To all which I beg you will be kind enough to answer me by due course of post.—You will not be a little surprised at my so strongly desiring to know what is become of him, after I repeat to you his undutiful behaviour to the tenderest of parents: he never asked of us any thing but what was granted, that were in our poor abilities to do ; nay, we even distressed ourselves, whose works are given over by old age, to let him have



£20 on bond, and every other tender mark a parent could possibly shew a child; his ingratitude, or want of duty, has been such, that he has not wrote to me upwards of two years.—If the above account be true, I am heartily sorry that a woman, whose character and amiableness deserve the greatest respect, love, and esteem, as I have always on enquiry been informed yours did, should be tied for life, to the worst of husbands.

“ I am, dear Daughter,

“ Your affectionate Mother,

“ F. PAIN.”

“ For God’s sake, let me have your answer, as I am almost distracted.”

He arrived at Philadelphia in the winter of 1774, a few months before the battle of Lexington. He was first engaged as shopman, by Mr. Aitkin, a bookseller in Philadelphia, at the wages of twenty pounds a year. In November 1775, he was employed in a laboratory. He took great pains in experiments for the purpose of discovering some cheap, easy, and expeditious method of making saltpetre. He was also the proposer of a plan for the voluntary supplying of the public ma-

gazines with gunpowder; and earnestly laboured to persuade the inhabitants of Philadelphia to adopt it.

On the 10th of January 1776, was published his *Common Sense*, an octavo pamphlet of sixty-three pages. This pamphlet was eagerly read, passed through several editions, and was even translated into German. Prosecuting the career, upon which he had thus not unsuccessfully entered, he, on the 19th of December 1776, published in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, the first number of the *Crisis*, intended, like the former work, to encourage the Americans in their opposition to the British Government.—The *Crisis*, he continued to publish in occasional numbers, till the 13th, and the last appeared on the same day on which a cessation of hostilities between America and Britain was proclaimed at Philadelphia, the 19th of April 1783.

Thus we see, that he was hardly arrived in America, when he set about digging up saltpetre for the destruction of his countrymen, the servants of that King whom he himself had served, and whom he would still have served, had he not been dismissed in disgrace. And can any

one have the folly to believe, or the impudence to say, that this man was actuated by a love of liberty and America?

The unprincipled, or silly, admirers of Paine, when they hear their hero attacked, never fail to stigmatize his enemies as enemies of the American cause. Their object in doing this is evident enough: but, in the name of common sense, what has the justice or injustice of that cause to do with an enquiry into the actions and motives of Paine? Is a man to be looked upon as regretting that America obtained its independence, merely because he detests a cruel, treacherous, and blasphemous ruffian who once wrote in favour of it? Are the characters of the men who effected the separation from Britain so closely united with that of Paine, that they must stand or fall together? Are the merits of the Revolution itself at last to be linked to all that is base and infamous?

No one, not even Congress itself, ever attempted to justify the colonists in their revolt against their Sovereign upon any other ground than this: *that they were an oppressed people, unable to obtain a redress of their grievances, without ap-*



*pealing to arms.* Seeing them in this light, we must be careful to exclude from this justification all those subjects of the King, who assisted them without having partaken of the oppression of which they complained. Among the Americans themselves a difference of opinion might, and did prevail. Some looked upon themselves as oppressed, others did not; both parties were fully justified, upon the supposition that they acted agreeably to their consciences; but a man like Paine, just landed in the country, could have no oppression to complain of, and, therefore, his hostility against his country admits of no defence. He was a traitor, as were the Priestleys, the Prices, and all others of the same description. No good man, however zealous he might be in the Revolution, ever respected Paine, of which the coldness and neglect he experienced, as soon as order was re-established, is a certain proof. The faithful citizen, or subject, naturally detests a traitor: it is an impulse that none of us can resist; however we may differ in opinion in other respects, we all agree (to use one of Tom's own expressions) that "a traitor is the foulest fiend on earth."

In 1777, he was appointed by the Congress, secretary to their committee for foreign affairs. When Silas Deane, commercial agent for the Congress in Europe, was recalled, to make room for William Lee, once an alderman of London, a contention ensued between Deane and the family of the Lees; and Paine took part in the controversy, by attacking Deane. He took occasion to involve in the dispute the famous Robert Morris, financier of the United States. Morris interfered against him; and Paine was inadvertently provoked to retail, through the channel of the newspapers, information which had been communicated to him in his office of secretary. This information betraying intrigues of the French Court, their ambassador complained to Congress. Paine being interrogated, confessed himself the author of the newspaper correspondence in question, and was in consequence dismissed from his office.

What remarks I have to make here, I shall preface by an extract from Swift's excellent work, lately published, on the Laws of Connecticut, book v. chap. vii. Speaking of Paine's "baseness in his attack on Christianity, by publishing his

Age of Reason," Mr. Swift observes—  
"This work is said to be written by Thomas Paine, secretary for foreign affairs to Congress in the American war.— Now, the truth is, that during some period of the American war, Congress appointed a committee for foreign affairs, to which Paine was secretary; but he had no power, and performed no duty, but that of clerk to the committee, without any portion of the authority afterwards annexed to the office of secretary for foreign affairs. From the post of secretary to the committee for foreign affairs, he was dismissed for a scandalous breach of trust. What must we think of a man who is capable of such a pitiful artifice to gratify his vanity, and render himself important?"

These are not the words of an Englishman, but of a native American, a learned and elegant writer, and a tried friend and servant of his country.

The account given by Mr. Swift of Tom's dismissal, confirms that which is given of it in his life. Both accounts, however, are silent as to the nature of the intrigues which he divulged. As I have heard this matter often spoken of by my



old bookseller and others, I will just repeat what I have heard, without pledging myself for the truth of it.

While Silas Deane was agent under the plenipotentiary administration of Doctor Franklin, at the Court of Versailles, these intriguing patriots had the address to procure a present of 200,000 stand of condemned arms from the King of France to the American Congress; but, as this was done at a time when the French Court had solemnly, though treacherously, engaged not to interfere in the dispute, the present was to be kept a secret among the immediate agents. The condemned arms, given as a present, were, by the faithful agents, charged as good ones, and paid for by the United States. Who pocketed the money, was then, and is still a question: but there seems to have been but little doubt of its having undergone a division and a subdivision, as the secret had extended far and wide, before Tom was silenced. I have heard more than one American, reputed democrats, curse Dr. Franklin for having misapplied the money of the country, and I imagine this must be what they allude to. He must certainly have found the philoso-

pher's stone, if he thus possessed the gift of turning old iron into gold ; and as I do not see, in his will, to whom he bequeathed this precious stone, I would thank his grandchild to inform us who the happy mortal is.

After having heard these accounts of this dismissal, which all agree, let us hear what Thomas says about it himself, in the second part of his Rights of Man : " After the declaration of independence, Congress unanimously appointed me secretary in the foreign department. But a misunderstanding arising between Congress and me, respecting one of their commissioners then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I resigned the office."—Was there ever a more pitiful attempt at acquiring reputation than this ? He was in England when he wrote thus ; he would not have dared to write this passage in America. He calls himself secretary in the foreign department, thereby giving to understand that he was secretary of state in America, as Lord Grenville or the Duke of Portland is in England, and as Mr. Jefferson then was in the United States. Secretary to the committee for

foreign affairs would have sounded small ; it would have made a jingle like that of halfpence ; whereas secretary of state rang in the ears of his empty-headed disciples, like guineas upon a hollow counter.

“ But a misunderstanding arising between Congress and me.” Here is another fetch at importance. “ Between Congress and me !” How the London Corresponding Society and affiliated mobs stared at this, I dare say. If his misconduct ever became a subject of discussion before Congress, that was all. A complaint was lodged against him, and Congress dismissed him ; but his offence was exposing what should have been kept secret, in writing for the Lees against Silas Deane. How does he twist this into a misunderstanding between Congress and him ? As well may the criminal say, ‘ he has had a misunderstanding with the judge who condemns him.

“ And so I resigned the office.” Mr. Swift says, and every one in America knows, that he was “ dismissed for a scandalous breach of trust ;” but this would not have been so convenient for the purpose of those infamous combinations of men who had undertaken to



spread his works about the three kingdoms. In the courtier's vocabulary, *resigned*, has long been synonymous with dismissed, discarded, and turned out; and we see that Thomas, though he rails against courts and courtiers, did not scruple to employ it in the same way.

But there was another reason for substituting *resigned* for *turned out*. He had every reason to believe that his life would be published, and he wisely foresaw, that his having been turned out of the Excise, and again turned out in America, would stagger the faith of some of his proselytes. To be turned out by a monarchical government, and afterwards by a republican one, would have been a pretty convincing proof that he was friendly to no government whatever. I sincerely believe that he hated, and that he still hates, the general government of the United States (as at present happily established), as much as the government of Great Britain. But it was necessary that he should find out something to hold up to the imitation of the English; no matter what, so as it differed from what they possessed. Being obliged, therefore, to make this use of the American govern-

ment, he was the more anxious to hide the truth with respect to his dismissal; for how awkward would it have looked, at the end of his pompous encomiums on the government of America, to add—this was the government that turned me out!

In August 1782, Thomas Paine published a controversial letter to the Abbé Raynal, in consequence of the latter author's publication of his *History of the Revolution of America*. Absurd as were the general principles which Paine had advanced in his *Common Sense*, Raynal being in great distress for want of something to say on the occasion, had adopted some of them. Paine reclaimed what was his own, and controverted much of the rest that the Abbé said.—His next production was a letter to the Earl of Shelburne, on the effects likely to arise to Great Britain from the acknowledged independence of America.

His labours had not yet received any substantial reward. He, in the meantime, suffered all the miseries of penury. He now solicited the American Assemblies to grant some recompence for the services by which he had contributed to the establishment of their independence.

New-York bestowed on him lands of little value at New Rochelle ! Pennsylvania granted him five hundred pounds.

In the autumn of 1786, he departed for France, after having, at New-York, seduced a young woman of a reputable family. In the beginning of the year 1787 he arrived in Paris, and exhibited before the French Academy of Science, the model of a bridge of peculiar construction.

On the 3d of September, in this same year, Thomas Paine arrived at the White Bear, in Piccadilly, London, after an absence of thirteen years from Britain.—His old friends recollected him, although he might have been better satisfied to have been forgotten by some of them.

Before the end of 1787, he published a pamphlet, intituled "Prospects on the Rubicon," &c.—In the year 1788, he was busy at Rotherham, in Yorkshire, about the casting of an iron arch for the bridge of which he had presented a model to the French Academy. This bridge proved merely an expensive project, by which the contriver was impoverished, and the community not benefited. At Rotherham his familiarities became disagreeable to the women.



Through various circumstances, Paine became indebted to Whiteside, the American merchant, whom he had employed to receive his remittances, and to furnish his expences, in the sum of six hundred and twenty pounds. Upon the bankruptcy of Whiteside, Paine was arrested by order of the assignees, at the White Bear, Piccadilly, on the 29th of October, 1789. He remained for three weeks confined in a spunging-house, till he was at length relieved by the kind interference of two eminent American merchants, Messrs. Clagget and Murdock.

Meanwhile Paine had, during his involuntary retirement, listened eagerly to the news of the rising commotions in France. Soon after he was set at liberty, therefore, he crossed the Channel, in order to be a nearer spectator of events in which he rejoiced. He returned to England about the time of the publication of Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution. His next work was an answer to Mr. Burke, in the First Part of his Rights of Man.

This work was published on the 13th of March, 1791, by a Mr. Jordan in Fleet-street. Conscious of the seditious false-

hoods which he had advanced in it, Paine dreaded even then the inquiries of the King's messengers, and sought concealment in the house of his friend, Mr. Brand Hollis; while it was industriously given out by those in his secret, that he had hastily departed for Paris.

The work which caused these fears, was perfectly of that cast, by which superficial readers and thinkers are most readily affected; grossly invective, frequently quibbling, confounding generals with particulars, and particulars with generals, audaciously bold, and speaking the language of prevalent prejudices. It was, besides, warmly recommended to the people by a Society, who took the denomination of Constitutional.

In the middle of May, after having thus laboured to enlighten or confound the British nation, Paine returned to Paris. While sojourning there, he entered into a controversy with Emanuel Syeyes, who had been chiefly active in framing the new constitution of France: Syeyes in defence of that limited monarchy which the new constitution had established; Paine, *against the whole hell of monar-*

*chy*—to use his own words. This controversy was soon dropped.

On the 13th of July 1791, Paine again arrived at the White Bear in Piccadilly, just in time to assist in the celebration of the anniversary of the French Revolution. He did not, however, appear at the public dinner on the following day. But he joined the celebrators about eight o'clock in the evening; when the people, enraged to see them brave the laws, and exult in events unfriendly to the happiness of Britain, had assembled tumultuously to drive them away from the Crown and Anchor Tavern, the place of their meeting. Mortified at finding those hostile to them, whom they had hoped to seduce to become the instruments of their turbulence, our Republicans published, on the 20th of August 1791, from the Thatched House Tavern, a seditious declaration, the writing of Paine, which obliged the inn-keeper to forbid them his house.

After these transactions, Paine was preparing to visit Ireland, in the character of an apostle of democracy, when he learned that the Irish were already so well acquainted with his *real character*, that he might probably meet with an unfavoura-



ble reception. On this he retired in disgust to Greenwich.

On the 4th of November 1791, he assisted, on the eve of the Gunpowder Plot, at the accustomed commemoration of the 5th of November, by the Revolution Society. He was thanked for his *Rights of Man*; and gave for his toast, the *Revolution of the World*.

Immediately after this, preparing to bring forth the *Second Part of his Rights of Man*, he hid himself in Fetter-lane. None knew where he was concealed, except Mr. Horne Tooke, whose friendly care corrected the inaccuracies of his style, and Mr. Chapman, who was employed to print his book. At Mr. Chapman's table he occasionally spent a pleasant evening, after the solitary labours of the day. After this commodious intercourse had subsisted for several months, Paine was somehow moved to insult Mr. Chapman's wife;\* in consequence of which, the printer turned him out of doors with indignation, exclaiming that he had *no more principle than a post, and no more religion than a ruffian*.

Paine has ascribed a different origin to

\* See Chapman's testimony on oath—Paine's Trial.

this quarrel with his printer: but it is proper that even in so small a matter the truth should be known. A false tale was held out to the public, as is stated at length in Mr. Oldys's pamphlet: and that part of the work which had been rejected by Mr. Chapman, was transferred to a Mr. Crowther.

This *Second Part* was at length printed and published: being recommended by the same qualities as the *First*, it met with a similar reception. Its author, finding that he had now excited against himself the strongest abhorrence of all the worthier part of the nation, thought it prudent to retire to France. In the meantime he printed a letter to Mr. Secretary Dundas, and another to Lord Onslow, the absurd scurrility of which might be supposed matchless, were it not that the same author has since exceeded it in an Address to the Addressers upon his Majesty's proclamation for the suppression of seditious writings—and in a Letter to the National Convention of France.

His actions and writings, however little credit they may have done him in Britain, recommended him to a seat in the French Convention.

It would be difficult for him to find

any other assembly in the world in which he would be not less respectable than most of the leaders. To what issue this last preferment of his may lead, it is not easy to predict. But from the complexion of some of the late sittings of the Convention, it seems extremely probable that his career may finish with that miserable end to which Providence generally permits the machinations of such men to conduct them at last.

For the publication of those writings, the tendency of which is avowedly seditious, and of which there has been too much use made towards the disturbing of the domestic tranquillity of the British empire—our author has, since his retreat into France, been indicted at the instance of the King, as usual in such cases; tried at Guildhall, before Lord Kenyon, and found guilty by a very respectable jury, as the author and publisher of a book, called “Second Part of the Rights of Man, containing many false, wicked, scandalous, malicious, and seditious assertions.”

It is scarcely necessary to add, that booksellers and other venders of Paine’s works must see, by this verdict, that the laws of their country, if diligently enforced,



are ready to punish them for so dishonest a traffic.

The reader of this plain, candid narrative may judge for himself, whether Paine be a friend to Great Britain, or a man whose conduct he would chuse to imitate, or whose advice he would follow in ordinary cases; and what reliance can be placed on the facts which he has boldly asserted as the groundwork of most of his wild theories.

Here ends the account of Paine's life, as I find it in print, and which was published about the beginning of 1793. I shall now attempt a continuation of it down to the present time, dwelling on such parts only of his conduct as will admit of no dispute respecting facts.

Thomas having merited death, or, at least, transportation in England, was a strong recommendation to him in France, whose newly enlightened inhabitants seem to have conceived a wonderful partiality for all that is vile. Several of the departments disputed with each other the *honour* of having a convict for their representative; a thing not so much to be wondered at, when we recollect that their

wise rulers declared, by a decree, that the galley-slaves were all most excellent patriots, and that the hangman's was a post of honour.

The exact time of Tom's flight to this country of liberty and virtue is not mentioned, I believe, in the above account; but I recollect hearing his arrival talked of in the month of June, 1792. I had been on a trip from St. Omer's to Dunkirk, and on my return, I first heard the news announced to a pretty numerous company in the canal stage. "Voilà (says an old monk, who had been driven from his cell by the sans-culottes, and who was now looking over the gazette) "Voilà ce coquin de Paine qui nous arrive de l'Angleterre."—"Ah, mon Dieu!" (exclaimed a well-dressed woman who was sitting beside me) "Ah, la pauvre France! Tous les scélérats de tous les pays de l'univers vont s'assembler chez nous." The justness of this observation struck me at the time, and has often occurred to my memory since. Indeed every man of infamous character, every felon, and every traitor, began, at the time I am now speaking of, to look upon France as his home; and this circumstance, better than

any other, marks the true character of the Revolution. The property of the nation was laid prostrate, and these villains were assembling round it, as birds of prey hover over an expiring carcase.

Whether Paine was really in France, or not, in June 1792, is immaterial: it is certain that he took his seat among that gang of bloodthirsty tyrants usually called the Convention, just time enough to assist in proscribing that Constitution which he had written two whole books in defence of, and in conferring every epithet of ridicule and reproach on the Constituent Assembly, whom he had a few months before extolled, as "the most august, illuminated, and illuminating body of men on earth." It was now that the English reformers and the democrats of America would have blushed, had not their fronts been covered with bull-hide, for the pompous eulogiums they had heaped on the author of the *Rights of Man*.

The first job that Tom was set about, after the destruction of the Constitution, was, making another. This was a thing of course, for there is no such thing as living without constitutions now-a-days. Thomas and his fellow journeymen, Brissot,



Clavière, and about half a dozen others, fell to work, and, in a very few days, hammered out the clumsy, ill-proportioned devil of a thing, commonly called the Constitution of 1793. Of this ridiculous instrument I shall only observe, that, after being cried up by the American newspapers, as the masterpiece of legislative wisdom, it was rejected with every mark of contempt, even by the French themselves. What is too absurd for them to swallow, must be absurd indeed!

About the time that this constitution-work was going on, the unfortunate King was brought to trial by his ten times perjured and rebellious subjects. Paine did not vote for his death; a circumstance that his friends produce as a proof of his justice and humanity, forgetting at the same time, that they thereby brand all those who did vote for it, with injustice and barbarity. However, upon closer inquiry, we shall find little reason for distinctions between Tom and his colleagues. He voted for the King's banishment, the banishment of a man perfectly innocent; and it was owing merely to his being embarked with the faction of Brissot, instead of that of Danton, that he did not vote

for his death. Brissot afterwards published, in the name of his whole party, the reasons why they looked on it as good policy not to put the King to death; on these reasons was the vote of Paine founded, and not on his humanity or his justice. Pétion, the infamous Pétion de Villeneuve, did not vote for the King's death: yet certainly no one will believe that motives of justice or humanity restrained the man, who, after having plotted the insurrection of the 10th of August, brought it against the King as a crime, and who loaded the royal captives and their children with every insult and cruelty that the heart of an upstart savage tyrant could suggest.

The whole process of the trial of the King of France, from the beginning to the end, was the most flagrant act of injustice that ever stained the annals of the world. It was well known to every one, and particularly to the audacious regicides themselves, that he was innocent of every crime laid to his charge. The sentence of banishment was therefore as unjust as that of death. Injustice is ever injustice: it may exist in different degrees, but it can never change its nature. Had Paine been a just and humane man, he would have

stood up boldly in the defence of innocence, in place of sheltering himself under a vote for banishment. Banishment! Great God! Banishment on the head of the towering family of Bourbon, pronounced by a discarded English Exciseman!—What must have been the feelings of this forsaken Prince, who was once called the great and good ally of America, when he heard the word *banishment*! come from the lips of a wretch raised to notice by the success of a Revolution of which he himself had been a principal support!—I hope no such thought came athwart the mind of the unfortunate Louis; if it did, certain I am it must have been ten million times more poignant than the pangs of death.

However Paine might find it convenient to vote upon this occasion, it is certain he did not feel much horror at the murder of the benefactor of his “beloved America,” or he would not have remained with, and in the service of, his murderers. He was told this by his quondam friend, Mr. King, in a letter sent him from England soon afterwards. “If the French kill their King, it will be a signal for my departure; for I will not abide among such



sanguinary men.—These, Mr. Paine, were your words at our last meeting; yet, after this, you are not only with them, but the chief modeller of their new Constitution, formed so heterogeneous and inconsistent, so hypothetical and contradictory, as shews me that, provided your theories obtain fame, you are indifferent how the people may be disappointed in the practice of them.”

Having introduced this correspondence here, it is a proper place for me to give the reader a striking proof of Thomas's disinterestedness, a quality for which he sets a very high value on himself. “Politics and self-interest” (says he, in the Second Part of what he calls his *Rights of Man*) “have been so uniformly connected, that the world has a right to be suspicious of public characters: but, with regard to myself, I am perfectly easy on this head. I did not, at my first setting out in public life, turn my thoughts on subjects of government from motives of self-interest: and my conduct from that moment to this proves the fact.”——After this bouncing outset, he goes on and tells his readers how disinterested he was in America, quite forgetting, however, to observe that

he solicited, and obtained, a recompence for his services, as is stated in the above account of his life.—The following letter will put his disinterestedness in a very clear point of view, and may, perhaps, serve to remove the film from the eyes of some of those, who are apt to place too much confidence in the professions of our disinterested patriots.

“Dear King,

“I don’t know any thing these many years, that surprised, and hurt me more, than the sentiments you published in the COUNTY HERALD, the 12th December, signed JOHN KING, Egham Lodge. You have gone back from all you ever said.—You used to complain of abuses as well as me, and wrote your opinions on them in free terms. What then means this sudden attachment to Kings?—this fondness of the English Government, and hatred of the French?—If you mean to curry favour by aiding your Government, you are mistaken; they never recompense those who serve it; they buy off those who can annoy it, and let the good that is rendered it, be its own reward. Believe me, KING, more is to be obtained by cherishing the

rising spirit of the people, than by subduing it. Follow my fortunes, and I will be answerable that you shall make your own.

“THO. PAINE.”

“Paris, January 3, 1793.”

This letter ought to be stuck upon every wall and every post in the United States, and in every other country where the voice of the people is of any consequence. It is the creed, the *multum in parvo*, of all the pretended patriots that ever infested the earth. It is all in all; it is conclusive, and requires neither colouring nor commentary.

After the death of the King of France, there was a long struggle between the faction of Brissot, to which Tom had attached himself, and that of Danton, Robespierre, and Marat. The last-named murderer was dispatched by a murderess of Brissot's faction, after which her abettors were all guillotined, imprisoned, or proscribed. Thomas saved his life by countenancing the degradation of the Christian religion in his “Age of Reason.”

When Danton was solicited to spare him on account of his talents as a writer



in the cause of liberty, "tu ne vois pas donc, f— bête," replied he to the solicitor, "que nous n'avons plus besoin de pareils fanatiques." Cut-throat Danton was right enough; indeed they no longer stood in need of a fanatical writer in the cause of liberty, when they had made it a crime for men to weep.

Danton made a calculation of Tom's head and talents, just as a farmer makes a calculation of the labour, carcase, hide, and offal of a bullock; and he found that he would fetch more living than dead. By writing against religion, he might do his cause some service, and there was little or no danger to be apprehended from him; because, being an Englishman, it was only giving him that name, and he could at any time have him killed and dressed, *a la mode de Paris*, at five minutes warning.

Horrid as Paine's attack on revealed religion must appear to every one untainted with deism or atheism, the base assailant is not seen in his true colours, in his blackest hue, till the opinions in his "Age of Reason" are compared with the hypocritical canting professions of respect for "the Word of God," contained in

some of his former writings. In his *Common Sense*, calling on the people to separate themselves from the government that had discarded him, he says it is "a form of government that the word of God bears testimony against;" and in another part of the same work, proposing the promulgation of a new charter, he says, "that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honours, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God."—In another place he spends whole pages in endeavouring to persuade his readers that monarchy is disapproved of by God, and he brings his proofs from Holy Writ, concluding with these words—"these portions of the Holy Scriptures are direct and positive; they admit of no equivocal construction."—In one part of the same writings he complains of the "impiety" of the Tories, and in another, of "the unchristian peevishness of the Quakers." He calls upon the people to turn out in the name of God. "Say not," adds he, "that thousands are gone out, turn out your tens of thousands; throw not the burthen of the day upon Providence, but

show your faith by your works, that God may bless you."

—"We claim," (says he again, keeping up the cant) "we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and glory in the generosity of the sentiment."—Generous and sentimental rascal! Whom do you claim brotherhood with now? Who will admit as a brother, the wretch who at one time calls the Scriptures the word of God, and quotes them as an infallible guide, and at another, ridicules them as a series of fictions, contrived by artful priests to amuse, delude, and cheat mankind?

From Paine's *Common Sense* and his *Age of Reason* we may perceive how his opinion differed concerning the Americans at the two epochs of his writing. When he wrote the former, he looked upon them as a conscientious and pious people; but when he wrote the latter, he certainly looked upon them in the opposite light, or he never would have ventured to address the work to them. The fact is, he had altered his opinion of them upon the strength of what he saw in the greatest part of the public papers. After seeing a minister of the gospel abused, for



having boldly asserted the truth of its doctrines, in opposition to the horrid decrees of the French Convention; after having seen the name of *Jesus Christ* placed in a list of famous Democrats, along with the names of *Paine* and *Marat*, it was no wonder if he thought that his manual of blasphemy would be an acceptable present to his "beloved Americans."

Indeed, there is but too much reason to fear, that the *Age of Reason* being translated into English, apparently for the sole purpose of being published here, its being dedicated to the citizens of the United States, together with the uncommon pains that have been taken to propagate it, and the abuse that has been heaped upon all those who have attempted to counteract its effects, will do but little credit to the national character, in the opinions of those foreigners who are not well acquainted with it. Every effort should, therefore, be exerted to convince the world, that all men of sense and worth in America agree in their abhorrence of the work, and its malignant author. From this persuasion it is, that I here present my readers with an

extract from Mr. Swift's System of Laws of Connecticut, a work that every one should read, and that every one who reads, must admire.

"To prohibit," (says this learned and elegant writer), "to prohibit the open, public, and explicit denial of the popular religion of a country, is a necessary measure to preserve the tranquillity of a government. Of this no person in a Christian country can complain; for, admitting him to be an infidel, he must acknowledge that no benefit can be derived from the subversion of a religion which enforces the best system of morality, and inculcates the divine doctrine of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. In this view of the subject, we cannot sufficiently reprobate the baseness of Thomas Paine, in his attack on Christianity, by publishing his Age of Reason. While *experiencing in a prison the fruits of his visionary theories of government*, he undertakes to disturb the world by his religious opinions. He has the impudence and effrontery to address to the citizens of the United States of America, a paltry performance, which is

intended to shake their faith in the religion of their fathers; a religion, which, while it inculcates the practice of moral virtue, contributes to smooth the thorny road of this life, by opening the prospect of a future and better: and all this he does, not to make them happier, or to introduce a better religion, but to embitter their days by the cheerless and dreary visions of unbelief. No language can describe the wickedness of the man, who will attempt to subvert a religion which is a source of comfort and consolation to its votaries, merely for the sake of eradicating all sentiments of religion."

Of the many answers to Paine, no one demands so much of our praise and our gratitude as Dr. WATSON'S Apology for the Bible. From some weak attempts, by persons either unskilled on the subject, or unaccustomed to wield the weapons of disputation, the deists began to triumph in the thought that the clumsy cavillings of their leader were unanswerable, when this most excellent work appeared, and left nothing unanswered or unrefuted. It is as much impossible for me to do justice to the Apology, as to express my venera-



tion for its author. Learning, genius, candour, modesty, and humility, all seem to have united here, to do honour to the cause of Christianity, and cover its enemies with shame and confusion. And a circumstance that must be particularly mortifying to Paine, and to all the enemies of order and religion, the man to whom the world is indebted for this production, is an aristocrat, and a prelate of the Church of England, raised to his dignity by the choice of a King.

Let us now return to the hoary blasphemer at the bottom of his dungeon.— There he lies! manacled, besmeared with filth, crawling with vermin, loaded with years and infamy. This, reader, whatever you may think of him, is the author of the Rights of Man, the eulogist of French liberty. The very same man who a few months back boasted of being “the representative of twenty-five millions of free men.” Look at him. Do you think now, in your conscience, that he has the appearance of a legislator, a civilian, a constitution-maker? It is no tyrannical King, I’ll assure you, who has tethered him thus. He was condemned by his colleagues, and his fetters were rivet-

ted by his own dear constituents. Here he is, fairly caught in his own trap, a striking example for the disturbers of mankind.

After Thomas got out of his *cachot* (a word, I dare say, he understands better than any other in the French language), it was reported that he was dead; but it has appeared since, that the report of his death was owing to a mode of expression which the French have, whereby a person sunk into insignificance, is said to be dead. He, or some one in his name, has lately written a work, entitled, "The Decline and Fall of the British System of Finance," of which it is quite enough to say, that it is of equal merit with the rest of his writings. All his predictions have hitherto remained unfulfilled; and those contained in the last effort of his malice, will share the same fate. It is extremely favourable for British bank-notes, that he who doubts of their solidity, will not believe in the Bible.—Such has been the life of a man, who has done all the mischief he can in the world; and whether his carcase is at last to be suffered to rot on the earth, or to be dried in the air, is of very little consequence. Whenever or

wherever he breathes his last, he will excite neither sorrow nor compassion; no friendly hand will close his eyes, not a groan will be uttered, not a tear will be shed. Like Judas, he will be remembered by posterity; men will learn to express all that is base, malignant, treacherous, unnatural, and blasphemous, by the single monosyllable—PAINE.

FINIS.



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